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SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : May I ask whether the Government of Madras thought of some special schemes in the State and whether for lack of funds and because of the fact that their inclusion in the Plan would exceed the amount allotted to the State, they were not able to put through those schemes?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : There are ever so many schemes available and if only funds are also available, they could be taken up. But the allotment is limited to Rs. 152 crores and, as hon. Members are aware, the cost of the schemes also has gone up to a certain extent. Taking all that into account, we may be spending a little more than Rs. 150 crores.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : May I know whether the allocation of funds by the Central Government is made on the basis of population or on considerations of industrial backwardness and other things?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM : All aspects have been taken into consideration in addition to the resources available in each State.

Conference of Food Ministers.

* 38 *Q.*—SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether any Conference of Food Ministers of States was held recently at Delhi on 7th November 1958 to discuss the steps to be taken to reduce the price of rice;

(*b*) if so, the decision arrived at ; and

(*c*) the action taken or proposed to be taken by the Government to reduce the price of rice in this State?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (*a*) Yes.

(*b*) & (*c*) This Government suggested a limited scheme of procurement and distribution through fair price shops for consideration at the meeting. But it was reported by the Union Minister for Food and Agriculture that a proposal of this type was already receiving the attention of the Government of India. Subsequently, the National Development Council has decided that trading in foodgrains should be taken over by the State Governments. The details of this scheme are being worked out. Meanwhile, with the concurrence of the Government of India, this Government have decided to procure tentatively two lakhs of tons of rice from the main harvest for distribution through fair price shops, whenever necessary. The Government of India have also since notified the maximum wholesale prices for paddy and rice in this State.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : May I know the quantity so far procured by the Government and whether the procurement was made at the price stipulated by the Government?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : This notification was issued only on the 2nd February. I do not think Government agencies have started procuring. Regarding the price, there is no question about it. Government will purchase only at the price notified. Not only Government purchases but all transactions must be effected only on this basis. Nobody can sell at any higher price.

SRI A. M. ALLAPICHAI : The idea of the Government is to see that the rice is sold at a certain fixed rate. Is it so?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Yes, the idea is that rice should not be sold at prices higher than those that have been fixed as the maximum.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Apart from the proposal to procure two lakhs of tons of rice in this State, is there any proposal before the Government to procure rice from other surplus States where rice may be available in plenty?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : There is no such proposal and Government do not see any need for it.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Inasmuch as people in Madras are accustomed to Nellore rice and as, according to the statement of the Hon. Minister, it is not available in the City, now that we are in the Southern Zone, is any attempt made by the Government to purchase Nellore rice from the neighbouring State?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : If the Government should go to Nellore and purchase rice, they must purchase it at a higher price. But Government are looking into the question of easy transport of rice from Nellore for sale in Madras City.

SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Inasmuch as Madras State is included in the Southern Zone which entails an obligation on the part of one State within the zone to sell rice to another State in the same zone (just as we are sending rice to Kerala), is it not incumbent on our Government to get rice from Nellore so that the people in the City who are accustomed to that rice may get a regular supply of that rice ?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : In the zonal arrangement there is no obligation for any State to sell rice to any other State. There is free movement and rice is normally expected to move from a zone or area where it is in surplus to areas like Madras City and other areas.

In this connection, I may state that regarding Nellore rice, it was pointed out to us that besides the prices quoted, those who were induced to sell should be paid the transport and other allowances. That is being looked into by the Government.

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SRI MOHAMED RAZA KHAN : Is it true that as soon as the announcement was made by the Government that they were going to procure two lakh tons of rice in the open market, a tendency developed among the millers and others to corner the stocks so that Government might not get the two lakh tons proposed to be procured by them?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : That is not the information that I have received. On the other hand, the millers and wholesalers pointed out that they did not have any stock at all because paddy and rice were not sold to them.

Testing of foodgrains

* 39 *Q.*—SRI G. KRISHNAMOORTHY : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state the arrangements made for testing foodgrains imported into this State?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : This Government are not importing any foodgrains into this State from outside on Government account. Only the Government of India are importing foodgrains from abroad and they have issued necessary standing instructions to their officers for inspection of the grains.

SRI G. KRISHNAMOORTHY : Is it not possible to get the grains tested before they enter our State even though they come from the Centre?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : I may tell the hon. Member that so far as this State is concerned, we do not import any grains—even paddy and rice.

SRI G. KRISHNAMOORTHY : Are we not getting foreign wheat into our State?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : Yes, foreign wheat imported into India is allotted to this State and that is sold by merchants and in the fair price shops.

SRI G. KRISHNAMOORTHY : Cannot any arrangement be made by this Government to see that this wheat is not contaminated or adulterated?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : All normal precautions are being taken. But still if the hon. Member has any specific point to make and if he has any feeling that impure wheat is being imported and distributed, he can bring that to my notice and I will look into the matter.

VIDWAN T. MUTHUKANNAPPAN : நெல்லும் கல்லும் கலந்து விற்பதில் நம்முடைய நாட்டார் பேர் போனவர்கள் என்ற கெட்ட பெயர் இருக்கிறது. அதைப் போக்க அரசாங்கம் நடவடிக்கை எடுக்குமா ?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : அந்தமாதிரிப் பெயர் இருக்கிறதா இல்லையா என்பது ஒருபுறமிருக்க, அந்தமாதிரிப் பெயர் அதிகப்பட இந்தமாதிரிக் கேள்விகள் பயன்படுகின்றன,